

could marry and move off to new, favourable, unsettled land. The wide geographical spacing of the population no doubt greatly limited the spread of infectious diseases. The enormous proliferation of the porphyria gene was in fact no more than a part of the general increase of population as it affected the descendants of one particular couple.

J. A. FRASER ROBERTS

Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Human Genetics, Rome, September 6-12, 1961. Edited by Luigi Gedda. Rome, 1963. Istituto Gregorio Mendel. Volume I, Pp. 108* + 697. Price 10,000 lire each volume; 22,000 lire the set of three volumes.

HERE IS THE first instalment of another of the vast Congress reports of which it is impossible to write a review, as such. Volumes 2 and 3 are promised in the near future; each will consist of 700-800 pages, and volume 3 will include a general index.

The preface and introduction are printed in Italian, English, French and German; the inaugural speeches and the papers themselves are either in the language of the delegate who presented them, or in one of the four official languages of the Congress.

The Conference, as it was then called, was reported in the January 1962 issue of this REVIEW (53, 209-14) and the names were there given of the delegates with close links with the Eugenics Society; this report was followed by abstracts of some contributions of particular eugenic interest. Advance Abstracts of all the Conference papers had been presented to those taking part, and single-language volumes were prepared from them shortly afterwards by the Excerpta Medica Foundation.

In his foreword, Professor Gedda explains the delay in publishing the full text of the Proceedings—a tale which goes to any editor's heart—and lays the blame firmly (but decently veiled) on the shoulders of the authors who decided to change what they had said into what they wish they had said. He also explains in his "Historical Retrospect" the change of name from Conference to Congress: the third Meeting is to be held in 1966 at the University of Chicago,

and Americans prefer "Congress." "It was therefore deemed advisable," says Professor Gedda, "to use the same term in the Proceedings of the Rome Conference . . . to avoid confusion in bibliographical research."

There were nineteen sessions during the six days of the Congress and in the published volumes they are arranged according to their subject matter rather than in the chronological order in which they were held. Six sessions are covered in Volume I: From Mendelian to Molecular Genetics in Man; Population Genetics, Mutation and Natural Selection; Methods in Human Genetics; Twins and Human Genetics; Inheritance of Normal Quantitative and Qualitative Human Traits; Microbial and Biochemical Genetics.

At its closing session the Congress voted on, and unanimously approved, a Resolution proposed by Professors Penrose, Boyes, Kallman and Gedda:

The members of the Second International Congress on Human Genetics, having considered the harmful effects of ionizing radiation on the exposed individual or his offspring, request all responsible governments of the world to enter into an agreement prohibiting the development and use of atomic weapons.

The members also request that the genetic effects of the use of atomic energy and radiation for peaceful purposes be carefully studied, and strict control measures be formulated and observed.

The book is admirably produced, with many illustrations, graphs, maps, tables and genealogies. Professor Gedda cannot fail to feel amply rewarded for all the work that has gone to the making of this most valuable symposium.

K. H.

Genetics Today. Edited by S. J. Geerts. Proceedings of the XI International Congress of Genetics, The Hague, September 1963. Oxford, 1963. Pergamon. Volume I, *Abstracts*. Pp. 332. Price 100s.

THIS VOLUME OF Abstracts of the papers presented at the XI International Congress of Genetics must be looked upon as a reference book. After an outlay of £5 the purchaser is entitled to find it both useful and comprehensive.